
BUSINESS MEETING

Wednesday, July 29, 2015

UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS
114TH Congress, First Session

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U.S. SENATE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

1 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:09 a.m. in, Room 116, The Capitol,
2 Hon. Bob Corker, chairman of the committee, presiding.

3 **PRESENT.** Senators Corker [presiding], Flake, Gardner, Perdue, Isakson, Barrasso,
4 Cardin, Menendez, Coons, Udall, Kaine, and Markey.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BOB CORKER, U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE

5 **THE CHAIRMAN.** The business meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee
6 will come to order. I am going to go ahead and get started with the ranking member.
7 When we have enough people here to vote, we can.

8 We have several items on the agenda today, including two pieces of legislation, a
9 number of nominations, and a Foreign Service officer list.

10 We will be able to move forward on S. 1632, a bill by Senator Collins to require a
11 regional strategy to address the threat posed by Boko Haram. I appreciate her and the
12 efforts of Senators Cardin and Flake to work out an agreement, since it was held over
13 from our last business meeting. So thank you both for that.

14 Also, I appreciate Senator Menendez's work on S. 1875, the Afghanistan
15 Accountability Act. This legislation seeks to ensure that our assistance to Afghanistan is

1 impactful and not counterproductive in inviting corruption. I think we all know the
2 long history of counterproductive efforts.

3 We also will consider S. 284, the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability
4 Act, legislation long championed by Senator Cardin.

5 And on all things human rights, thank you for your efforts in that regard.

6 We will consider a number of important nominees, including multiple
7 ambassadors, the nominee for Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs, and the assistant
8 administrator and administrator for USAID. We will also consider a Foreign Service
9 officer list.

10 I want to thank my colleagues for helping the committee work these nominations
11 in an appropriate fashion.

12 With that, I would like to recognize the distinguished ranking member for any
13 comments.

14 Senator Cardin?

**STATEMENT OF HON. BEN CARDIN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MARYLAND**

15 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Mr. Chairman, first, thank you very much. As soon as we get
16 the required numbers, please let me know, and we will move for action.

17 I want to thank you particularly for including the nominees that are on this
18 agenda for action by this committee. You are allowing us to move promptly on

1 important executive positions with the advice of the committee, and I thank you very
2 much.

3 I particularly want to acknowledge Gayle Smith, the administrator for USAID,
4 because we have had discussions about the importance of having a confirmed head of
5 USAID during this critical time.

6 So I thank you very much for including all these nominees.

7 I want to mention the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act. I
8 want to thank my colleagues on the committee, Senators Shaheen, Rubio, Markey, and
9 Coons. I also want to acknowledge the extraordinary work of Senators McCain,
10 Durbin, Blumenthal, Wicker, Kirk, and Cruz. And I could mention many others who
11 have worked on the Magnitsky accountability act.

12 I think you are all familiar with how this legislation is known globally by those
13 who stand up for basic rights, and the Magnitsky Accountability Act has worked very
14 with regards to Russia.

15 This legislation will make it global, allowing for us to take action against those
16 who have committed violations of human rights, to be denied access to our banking
17 system, which they use to further their own various acts, and the right and privilege to
18 visit our country.

1 This bill also strikes the right balance between executive and legislative. It allows
2 the executive to make the decision, but we have the opportunity to bring forward
3 particular names in the right process for review by the executive branch.

4 So I thank you very much for including that legislation in today's markup.

5 I also want to thank you for the way in which the staffs have worked out the
6 language on the Boko Haram legislation by Senator Collins. I am glad we are able to
7 move forward on this. You and I have sent a letter to President Obama, urging him to
8 engage the new Nigerian administration, and this bill would further that effort in
9 pointing out the horrible tragedies. Over 13,000 Nigerians have been killed, and 1.5
10 million have been displaced, and this situation needs the spotlight of the international
11 community.

12 Lastly, let me thank Senator Menendez for the legislation he has brought forward
13 on accountability in Afghanistan. This speaks to the congressional concerns about
14 Afghanistan and provides the authorization for us to be partners in providing good
15 governance in Afghanistan. And I thank him for his leadership on this issue.

16 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Thank you.

17 What I might do just to move things along, if it is all right, is go ahead and name
18 the nominations, so when people are here, we do not have to go through the long list,
19 unless anybody objects.

1 When we move to consider these en bloc, these will be the nominees we are
2 looking at: the Hon. Michelle Thoren Bond to be the Assistant Secretary of State,
3 Consular Affairs; Dr. Sarah Mendelson to be representative of the U.S. on the Economic
4 and Social Council of the U.N., and alternate representative of the U.S. to the General
5 Assembly of the U.N.; Ms. Sheila Gwaltney to be U.S. Ambassador to the Kyrgyz
6 Republic; Mr. Perry L. Holloway to be the Ambassador to the Co-operative Republic of
7 Guyana; Ms. Laura Farnsworth Dogu to be the Ambassador to the Republic of
8 Nicaragua; Mr. Peter F. Mulrean to be Ambassador to the Republic of Haiti; Mr. Paul
9 Jones to be Ambassador to the Republic of Poland; Ms. Gayle Smith to be the
10 administrator of the United States Agency for International Development; Ms. Kathleen
11 Doherty to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Cyprus; Dr. James Melville to be
12 Ambassador to the Republic of Estonia; Mr. Samuel Heins to be Ambassador to the
13 Kingdom of Norway; the Hon. Hans Klemm to be the Ambassador to Romania; Mr.
14 Thomas Melia to be assistant administrator of USAID.

15 I want to thank all these nominees for their willingness to serve our country in
16 these positions.

17 I do not know if Senator Cardin has any comments?

18 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Once again, I thank you for including all those nominations. I
19 think there is also a Foreign Service list that we will be taking up, and each one has gone
20 through the vetting process in this committee.

1 And I support each one of these nominees and urge our colleagues to also
2 support their favorable consideration on the Senate floor.

3 **THE CHAIRMAN.** At this moment, we will pause, if someone would like to speak.
4 Senator Menendez?

5 **SENATOR MENENDEZ.** Number one, I intend to support all the nominees. I do have
6 a concern with our nominee to be the Ambassador to the Republic of Cyprus, in terms
7 of answers that I received.

8 I am not questioning the individual's qualifications. I am concerned about the
9 answers. I know the answers were constrained by the State Department as a whole, so I
10 am going to move the process along, and I will not oppose or ask it to be held over, but
11 I reserve my rights on the floor as it relates to that nomination.

12 Secondly, I appreciate your listing of Senator Cardin's support for the
13 Afghanistan Accountability Act. I think after so many lives and national treasure, and
14 the continuing expense of the U.S. taxpayer dollars to get the type of accountability that
15 we want in Afghanistan, it is critically important.

16 I think we have a new partner there. The early signs are promising. So we need
17 to build upon those signs.

18 So I appreciate the chair and ranking member's support.

19 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Thank you.

20 Any other comments? Comments on any topic are welcome.

1 [Laughter.]

2 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Mr. Chairman, let me say I know that you and I have talked
3 about a House bill that is coming over here to make Megan's Law international,
4 something we both support. I understand this week we got some language from
5 Senator Shelby, who has some interest in that legislation. We also have heard from the
6 administration.

7 And I am hopeful we can resolve the differences in drafts, so we can take it up at
8 our next meeting, which I hope will be before the recess.

9 **THE CHAIRMAN.** I do, too.

10 Okay, I want to thank everybody for coming. I know there is a lot going on.
11 Once we finish this meeting, I know there is a second vote, and then we plan to convene
12 the next meeting on Iran. I am hopeful it will be well-attended. I think we have had
13 several briefings.

14 We have had some preliminary conversations. Again, I thank everybody for
15 being here.

16 Is there a motion to move all of the nominees that we have listed en bloc?

17 **SENATOR KAINE.** So moved.

18 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Is there a second?

19 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Second.

20 **THE CHAIRMAN.** All in favor, say aye.

1 All opposed?

2 Does anybody want to be listed as a "no" on any of the nominees? None, okay.

3 The ayes have it. They are all nominated and moved to the floor.

4 Next, we will move the USAID and Foreign Service list. I support these
5 appointments and would like to thank all these officers for their service.

6 Senator Cardin?

7 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Likewise.

8 **THE CHAIRMAN.** There are only three that have been held for additional questions.
9 There is a large number that we are moving. Does anybody wish to speak to this?

10 If there is no further discussion, do we have a motion?

11 **SENATOR CARDIN.** I move the approval.

12 **SENATOR KAINE.** Second.

13 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So moved and seconded.

14 The question is on the approval of the Foreign Service list, as modified.

15 All in favor, say aye.

16 Opposed?

17 The ayes have it. The appointments are agreed to.

18 Now we will consider S. 1632, a bill to require a regional strategy to address the
19 threat posed by Boko Haram, legislation that has been introduced by Senator Collins.

1 And I appreciate, as I mentioned earlier, her pursuing regular order for its
2 consideration before the committee of jurisdiction. This is timely legislation in the wake
3 of an election in Nigeria that changes the dynamic of cooperation and directs the
4 Secretary of State and Secretary of Defense to formulate a strategy to help Nigeria and
5 other regional partners address the Boko Haram threat and identify areas of
6 cooperation.

7 Senator Cardin, do you have any comments?

8 **SENATOR CARDIN.** I commented earlier. I thank you for working out the language
9 so we can move it forward. I am hoping we would all support the amended version.

10 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Would anyone else like to speak to this legislation?

11 I would entertain a motion to consider the substitute amendment.

12 **SENATOR GARDNER.** So moved.

13 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Second?

14 **SENATOR COONS.** Seconded.

15 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So moved and seconded.

16 The question is on the motion to approve the substitute amendment.

17 All those in favor, say aye.

18 All opposed?

19 The ayes have it. The substitute amendment is agreed to.

20 Is there a motion to approve the legislation, as amended?

1 **SENATOR CARDIN.** So moved.

2 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So moved. Is there a second?

3 **SENATOR BARRASSO.** Seconded.

4 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So moved and seconded.

5 The question is on the motion to approve S. 1632, as amended.

6 All in favor, say aye.

7 Opposed?

8 The ayes have it. The legislation is amended and agreed to.

9 Next, we will consider S. 1875, the Afghanistan Accountability Act, legislation
10 introduced by Senator Menendez.

11 This legislation seeks to promote greater effectiveness and accountability for U.S.
12 assistance in Afghanistan, including strengthening Afghan institutions tasked with
13 reducing corruption. I believe it will be an effective tool to improve accountability for
14 the considerable sums that remain in the pipeline that are likely to continue to be
15 provided to pursue our national interests as Afghanistan continues its political and
16 security transition.

17 Senator Cardin, do you have any additional comments?

18 **SENATOR CARDIN.** As I said earlier, I thank Senator Menendez for his leadership on
19 this. This is a very important action by Congress, to go on record as to the authorization
20 for our partnership with Afghanistan and our expectations.

1 **SENATOR MENENDEZ.** Mr. Chairman, I am informed that Senator Boxer is on the
2 floor with the transportation bill, but she has an amendment, which I think has been
3 shared with the chair and the ranking member —

4 **THE CHAIRMAN.** That is correct.

5 **SENATOR MENENDEZ.** — with reference to making a statement that the assistance
6 programs in direct support of Afghan women and girls remain a priority for the United
7 States, and I would move the amendment on her behalf.

8 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Is there a second?

9 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Second.

10 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So moved and seconded.

11 The question is on the motion to approve the Boxer amendment.

12 All in favor, say aye.

13 All opposed?

14 With that, the ayes have it. The Boxer amendment is agreed to.

15 Is there a motion to approve the legislation, as amended?

16 **SENATOR MENENDEZ.** So moved.

17 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Is there a second?

18 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Second.

19 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So moved and seconded.

20 The question is on the motion to approve S. 1875, as amended.

1 All in favor, say aye.

2 All opposed?

3 The ayes have it.

4 Our last piece of legislation is S. 284, the Global Magnitsky Human Rights
5 Accountability Act, which would authorize sanctions against those involved in gross
6 violations of human rights and acts of significant corruption. I know this is legislation
7 that Senator Cardin has championed, and I strongly believe in. Senator Rubio also
8 supports it.

9 I appreciate the leadership role that Senator Cardin continues to take in focusing
10 on human rights issues around the world.

11 Senator Cardin, do you have any additional comments?

12 **SENATOR CARDIN.** I have already commented on this, and I thank you for
13 accommodating the markup.

14 I know Senator Rubio has an amendment. I do not know if it is being offered.

15 **THE CHAIRMAN.** He is not here, if you want to offer it.

16 **SENATOR CARDIN.** I would be glad to offer it on his behalf. I think it strengthens the
17 bill by allowing the appropriate secretary that has responsibility in this area in the State
18 Department to make recommendations, and I think it strengthens the bill.

19 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Cardin is offering the Rubio amendment.

20 Is there a motion that we consider the Rubio amendment?

1 **SENATOR CARDIN.** So moved.

2 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Second?

3 **SENATOR KAINE.** Second.

4 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So moved and seconded.

5 The question is on the motion to approve the Rubio amendment.

6 All those in favor, say aye.

7 Opposed?

8 The ayes have it. The Rubio amendment is agreed to.

9 Is there a motion to approve the legislation, as amended?

10 **SENATOR CARDIN.** So moved.

11 **SENATOR MENENDEZ.** Second.

12 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So moved and seconded.

13 The question is on the motion to approve S. 284, as amended.

14 All in favor, say aye.

15 Opposed?

16 With that, the ayes have it.

17 That completes our committee's business. Thank you all very much for being

18 here.

19 I ask unanimous consent that staff be authorized to make technical and

20 conforming changes.

1 Without objection, so ordered.

2 Thank you, all.

[Whereupon, at 10:22 a.m., the meeting was adjourned.]